

[3 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Nagar Nigam for Ganga Action Plan-II, on the basis of alternative technology with the help of International support;

(b) if so, the decision taken in this regard;

(c) when the Ganga Action Plan-II is likely to commence and completed; and

(d) the total amount to be spent on Ganga Action Plan-II?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The Government has received two separate proposals for Ganga Action Plan Phase-II works for cleaning of Ganga at Varanasi, one from Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam and the other from Sankat Mochan Foundation, a non-governmental organization of Varanasi. Varanasi Nagar Nigam sent both the proposals to Government of Uttar Pradesh for their appraisal and forwarding the most appropriate proposal to Government. The Government of Uttar Pradesh after examining both proposals on their merit, forwarded the U.P. Jal Nigam proposal to Government for consideration and sanction. Both these proposals have been examined by a number of technical experts and committees during the past four years. These proposals were further considered by Government at a high level meeting on 13th July, 2001 and a decision in this matter will be taken shortly.

(c) and (d) The Ganga Action Plan Phase-II was approved for implementation in stages between 1993 and 1996 and includes works for pollution abatement of river Ganga as well as its tributaries Yamuna, Gomti and Damodar. The Plan is scheduled for completion by December, 2005. The total approved cost for Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is Rs.1498.86 crore.

Poaching in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve

1421. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Nandadevi Biosphere Reserve has become a hunting ground for poachers whose prized catches include the musk deer, Himalayan black brown bear and leopard;

(b) whether it is a fact that forest guard in that region are unarmed and are petrified of tackling poachers; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction in regard thereto and whether any poacher has ever been arrested and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) There are reports of illegal hunting of wild animals including musk deer, Himalayan bear and snow leopard in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve. But apprehending poachers is really a daunting task because of high altitude and topography of the area. The staff posted there need to be appropriately trained and equipped, to enable them to work in a more effective manner. Central Government provides funding for this purpose. Under Centrally sponsored scheme 'Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries' it has approved financial assistance worth Rs. 9.33 lakhs during 2001-02.

(c) A number of poachers have been caught and punitive actions have been taken against them. Figures for last 5 years are given below:

Year	No. of cases caught	Punitive Action Taken
1995-96	21 cases of attempt to poaching caught in buffer area	Rs. 14080/- realized as compensation from offenders
1996-97	32 cases of attempt to poaching caught in buffer area	Rs. 11500/- realized as compensation from the offenders
1997-98	17 poachers with 3 guns, one binocular, cartridges etc. arrested in 2 cases inside National Park	Poachers sent to Jail, Guns and other material seized and cases sent to court
1998-99	3 poachers with knife, ropes, ration caught in buffer area attempting poaching	Rs. 11000/- compensation realized from offenders
1999-2000	5 poachers with 2 guns, 1 bomb caught attempting poaching in buffer area	Guns confiscated and Rs. 25000/- realized as compensation.

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1	2	3
2000-2001	One case of wild bore poaching and one of Ghoral poaching caught and 2 other cases of attempt to poaching caught.	Rs. 2100/- realized as compensation from offenders.

Protection of tigers

1422. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Project Tiger has succeeded in protecting and increasing the number of tigers in India;

(b) what is the present number of living tigers in India, as compared to that in 1973;

(c) how many tigers have died or were killed during the last two years and the causes of their death;

(d) how many poachers have been arrested and brought to book for killing tigers; and

(e) what steps are being taken to protect the tigers and facilitate their further breeding?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) As against 1827 tigers in 1972, India now has about 3800 tigers.

(c) the number of deaths of tigers during last two years is as follows:

	1999	2000
Natural death	16	15
Death due to poaching	38	39
TOTAL:	54	54

(d) Action against the poachers is invariably taken by the State